



# A NEW DIRECTION

## PROGRESS FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**“This is one of the most productive Congresses in history.”**

Norman Ornstein, Congressional Scholar at American Enterprise Institute, Financial Times 3/19/10

**“... Congress and the White House have completed 16 months of activity that rival any other since the New Deal in scope or ambition...”** David Leonhardt, New York Times 5/22/10

Democrats are moving America forward, restoring Main Street values, and creating jobs here at home. We are fighting for Americans who work for a living—in the face of relentless opposition by Wall Street and the big bankers, Big Oil, and the health insurance industry, led in Congress by Republicans who are trying to take us back to the “exact same agenda” of failed Bush economic policies that caused the mess. We won’t go back.

### HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

#### ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND CREATING JOBS

**AMERICAN RECOVERY & REINVESTMENT ACT**, enacted in the first month of President Obama’s term, to jumpstart our economy, create and save 3.5 million jobs, give a tax cut to small business and 95% of American workers, begin to rebuild America’s road, rail, and water infrastructure, and make a historic commitment to education, clean energy, and science and technology, with unprecedented accountability. *(Signed into Law)*

**SMALL BUSINESS JOBS ACT**, landmark legislation providing \$12 billion in tax relief for small businesses by enacting 8 more small business tax cuts on top of the 8 already enacted by this Congress; creating up to 500,000 jobs, by leveraging up to \$300 billion in private sector lending for small businesses through a \$30 billion lending fund for community banks; fully paid for – doesn’t add a dime to the deficit. *(Signed into Law)*

**TEACHER JOBS/STATE AID/CLOSING TAX LOOPHOLES**, creating and saving nearly 320,000 jobs; providing \$10 billion to save 161,000 teacher jobs and \$16 billion in Medicaid aid, with the effect of creating/saving 158,000 jobs, including police officers, firefighters, nurses & private sector workers; fully paid for by closing loopholes that encourage companies to ship American jobs overseas; cutting deficit by \$1.4 billion. *(Signed into Law)*

**STUDENT AID & FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT**, making the largest investment in college aid in history – increasing Pell Grants, making college loans more affordable, and strengthening community colleges – while reducing the federal deficit by ending wasteful student loan subsidies to banks. *(Signed into Law)*

**HIRE ACT**, creating up to 300,000 jobs, by providing a payroll tax holiday for businesses that hire unemployed workers and a tax credit for businesses that retain these workers; also unleashes tens of billions of dollars to rebuild infrastructure; fully paid for by cracking down on offshore accounts for wealthy. *(Signed into Law)*

**CASH FOR CLUNKERS**, jump-starting the U.S. auto industry, providing consumers with up to \$4,500 to trade in an old vehicle for one with higher fuel efficiency—spurring the sale of 700,000 vehicles. *(Signed into Law)*

**WORKER, HOMEOWNERSHIP & BUSINESS ASSISTANCE ACT**, boosting the economy and creating jobs with more unemployment benefits for Americans hit by the recession, an expanded 1st-time homebuyer tax credit, and enhanced small business tax relief—expanded to all struggling U.S. businesses. *(Signed into Law)*

**U.S. MANUFACTURING ENHANCEMENT ACT**, to help U.S. manufacturers compete at home and abroad by temporarily suspending or reducing duties on intermediate products or materials these companies use that are not made domestically. *(Signed into Law)*

**UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS EXTENSION**, extending unemployment benefits to millions of American families through November 30, 2010; every dollar of unemployment benefits creates at least \$1.61 in economic activity. *(Signed into Law)*

**CURRENCY REFORM/FAIR TRADE**, to promote U.S. manufacturing jobs, by giving our government effective tools to address the unfair trade practice of currency manipulation by foreign countries, including China; their undervalued currency makes Chinese exports cheaper and America's exports to China more expensive, putting U.S. manufacturers at an unfair disadvantage; bill is WTO-compliant. *(Passed by House)*

**AMERICAN JOBS AND CLOSING TAX LOOPHOLES ACT**, to promote American jobs by restoring credit to small businesses, extending tax incentives for American R&D and tax relief for middle class American families, rebuilding American infrastructure, and expanding jobs for young people; and to close tax loopholes to make Wall Street billionaires pay their fair share of taxes. *(Passed by House)*

**HOME STAR JOBS**, to create 168,000 American jobs making energy efficiency products, by providing incentives for consumers to make their homes energy-efficient -- cutting energy bills for 3 million families and reducing our dangerous dependence on foreign oil and dirty fuels. *(Passed by House)*

**RURAL STAR/HOME STAR LOANS**, to create tens of thousands more U.S. jobs, by creating Rural Star loans for people in rural America to make their homes and farms more energy-efficient; and a Home Star Loan Program for no-interest loans for energy efficiency home upgrades in other areas; boosts demand for energy efficient products/materials and construction and installation services that are made in America. *(Passed by House)*

**PROTECTING AMERICAN PATENTS**, providing funding, fully offset, to prevent additional backlogs in patent applications, as patents are critical to American innovation and economic growth. *(Signed into Law)*

**AMERICA COMPETES REAUTHORIZATION**, to invest in modernizing manufacturing; basic R&D; high risk/high reward clean energy research; and teaching science, technology, engineering and math. *(Passed by House)*

**JOBS FOR MAIN STREET ACT**, to boost small business and to rebuild highways and transit; paid for by redirecting TARP funds from Wall Street to Main Street. *(Passed by House)*

**SMALL BUSINESS & INFRASTRUCTURE JOBS ACT**, to extend Build America Bonds to help finance the rebuilding of schools, hospitals, roads and bridges; and target tax incentives to spur investment in small businesses and help entrepreneurs looking to start a new business. *(Passed by House)*

**EDWARD M. KENNEDY SERVE AMERICA ACT**, tripling volunteerism opportunities to 250,000 for national service for students to retirees; increased college financial awards. *(Signed into Law)*

**PERMANENT ESTATE TAX RELIEF** at the 2009 level to ensure that 99.8 percent of estates never pay a dime of taxes and offer certainty and stability for farmers and small businesses. *(Passed by House)*

## PROTECTING CONSUMERS

**WALL STREET REFORM**, historic reforms to end taxpayer-funded bailouts and the idea of 'too big to fail', and protect and empower consumers to make the best decisions on mortgages, credit cards, and their own

financial future. Lack of accountability for Wall Street and big banks cost 8 million jobs. *(Signed into Law)*

**CREDIT CARDHOLDERS' BILL OF RIGHTS**, providing tough new protections already saving consumers money—like banning unfair rate hikes, abusive fees, and penalties—and strengthening enforcement. *(Signed into Law)*

**FRAUD ENFORCEMENT & RECOVERY ACT**, providing tools to prosecute mortgage scams and corporate fraud that contributed to financial crisis; creating an outside commission to examine its causes. *(Signed into Law)*

**LILLY LEDBETTER FAIR PAY ACT**, restoring the rights of women and other workers to challenge unfair pay—to help close the wage gap where women earn 78 cents for every \$1 a man earns in America. *(Signed into Law)*

**AIRLINE PASSENGER SAFETY**, to improve airline passenger safety, by several steps including strengthening commercial pilot training requirements, requiring a minimum of 1,500 flight hours required for an airline pilot certificate. *(Signed into Law)*

## HELPING HOMEOWNERS

**HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR HOMES ACT**, building on the President's initiative to stem the foreclosure crisis, with significant incentives to lenders, servicers, and homeowners to modify loans. *(Signed into Law)*

**FHA REFORM**, to shore up federal mortgage insurance in order to expand homeownership opportunities by making essential reforms to strengthen the financial footing of the Federal Housing Administration, saving taxpayers \$2.5 billion over 5 years. *(Passed by House)*

**FLOOD INSURANCE REAUTHORIZATION & REFORM**, reauthorizing the National Flood Insurance Program, upon which millions of American families and businesses rely, for five years and making key reforms to put the program on a stronger financial footing. *(Passed by House)*

## AFFORDABLE QUALITY HEALTH CARE

**HEALTH INSURANCE REFORM**, landmark legislation putting American families and small business owners—not the insurance companies—in control of their own health care; lowering costs for middle class and small business; holding insurance companies accountable to prevent denials of care and coverage, including for pre-existing conditions; strengthening Medicare and lowering prescription drug costs; creating up to 4 million jobs; and reducing deficit by largest amount in almost two decades. *(Signed into law)*

**HEALTH CARE FOR 11 MILLION CHILDREN**, to finally provide cost-effective health coverage for 4 million more children and preserve coverage for 7 million children already enrolled. *(Signed into Law)*

**FDA REGULATION OF TOBACCO**, granting the Food and Drug Administration authority to regulate advertising, marketing, and manufacturing of tobacco products, the #1 cause of preventable U.S. deaths, and to stop tobacco companies from targeting our children. *(Signed into Law)*

**ENSURING SENIORS' ACCESS TO THEIR DOCTORS**, by blocking scheduled 21% cut in Medicare physician payments through November 30, 2010 and also updating payments by 2.2%. *(Signed into Law)*

**FOOD SAFETY**, to fundamentally change the way we protect our food supply; close gaps exposed by recent food-borne illness outbreaks; give the FDA new authorities. *(Passed by House)*

**RYAN WHITE HIV/AIDS TREATMENT EXTENSION ACT**, guaranteeing access to lifesaving medical services, primary care, and medications for low-income patients with AIDS and HIV. *(Signed into Law)*

## CLEAN ENERGY JOBS/HOLDING BP ACCOUNTABLE

**AMERICAN CLEAN ENERGY AND SECURITY ACT**, historic legislation to create 1.7 million jobs (with the Recovery Act); help free us from funding terrorism with our dependence on foreign oil; reduce the carbon pollution causing climate change; keep costs low for Americans; will not increase the deficit. *(Passed by House)*

**RESPONSE TO BP OIL SPILL**, a bill providing a comprehensive response to BP oil spill – eliminating the \$75 million cap on the liability of oil companies, restoring the Gulf Coast and protecting local residents, imposing new safety requirements and strengthening oversight of offshore drilling, and protecting whistleblowers in offshore drilling industry who report safety violations. *(Passed by House)*

**SPILL ACT**, to reform maritime liability laws to ensure that the families of those killed or injured in the BP Oil Spill and other such tragedies are justly compensated for their losses. *(Passed by House)*

**BP OIL SPILL COMMISSION SUBPOENA POWER**, to give subpoena power to National Commission on BP Oil Spill to ensure that it cannot be stonewalled by BP or others in its search for spill's causes. *(Passed by House)*

**OMNIBUS PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT ACT**, the most significant conservation bill in 15 years, strengthening tourism and rural economies with more than 2 million new acres of wilderness and parks. *(Signed into Law)*

## FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY & GOVERNMENT REFORM

**BUDGET BLUEPRINT**, creating jobs with investments in health care, clean energy and education; cutting taxes for most Americans by \$1.5 trillion; cutting Bush deficit by more than half by 2013. *(Action Completed)*

**BUDGET ENFORCEMENT RESOLUTION**, setting a limit on discretionary spending for FY 2011 that requires spending cuts of \$7 billion below the President's budget and \$3 billion below Senate. *(Action Completed)*

**STATUTORY PAY-AS-YOU-GO**, to restore 1990s law that turned record deficits into surpluses, by forcing tough choices; Congress must offset new policies that reduce revenues or expand entitlements. *(Signed into Law)*

**IMPROPER PAYMENTS ELIMINATION**, to help identify and eliminate improper federal payments, as well as recover lost funds that federal agencies have spent improperly. *(Signed into Law)*

**WEAPON SYSTEMS ACQUISITION REFORM**, cracking down on Pentagon waste and cost overruns in the acquisition of weapon systems, increasing oversight and competition. *(Signed into Law)*

**REFORMING OTHER DOD ACQUISITION**, cleaning up DOD acquisition spending for the 80 percent that is for services and other non-weapons items, saving taxpayers an estimated \$27 billion a year. *(Passed by House)*

**DISCLOSE ACT**, to fight a corporate takeover of our elections, requires them to disclose they are behind political ads; bans foreign-controlled corporations from putting money in U.S. elections. *(Passed by House)*

## NATIONAL SECURITY/TROOPS AND VETERANS

**FY 2010 DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION**, authorizing 3.4% troop pay raise, strengthening military readiness and military families support, focusing our strategy in Afghanistan and redeployment from Iraq. *(Signed into Law)*

**FY 2011 DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION**, increasing hostile fire and imminent danger pay; extending TRICARE dependent coverage up to age 26; and strengthening counterterrorism. *(Passed by House)*

**REPEAL OF DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL**, to provide for the repeal of this outdated policy, contingent on the

certification that military review completed and that repeal would not impact readiness. *(Passed by House)*

**IRAN SANCTIONS**, significantly strengthening sanctions against Iran, including imposing sanctions on foreign entities that sell refined petroleum to Iran or assist Iran in its domestic refining capacity. *(Signed into Law)*

**VETERANS HEALTH CARE BUDGET REFORM & TRANSPARENCY ACT**, a top priority of veterans' groups, authorizing Congress to approve VA medical care appropriations one year in advance to ensure reliable and timely funding and prevent politics from ever delaying VA health care funding. *(Signed into Law)*

**FY 2010 MILITARY CONSTRUCTION-VA APPROPRIATIONS**, strengthening quality health care for 5 million veterans by investing 11% more for medical care, benefits claims processors, and facility improvements. *(Signed into Law)*

**CAREGIVERS AND VETERANS OMNIBUS HEALTH SERVICES**, landmark legislation providing help to caregivers of disabled, ill or injured veterans, and improving VA health services for women veterans. *(Signed into Law)*

**AGENT ORANGE BENEFITS**, providing long overdue disability benefits to more than 150,000 Vietnam veterans and survivors for exposure to Agent Orange. *(Signed into Law)*

## SECURITY FOR AMERICA'S COMMUNITIES

**FY 2010 HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS**, strengthening security at our ports and borders and on commercial airlines, giving first responders tools to respond to terrorism. *(Signed into Law)*

**HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT**, giving law enforcement resources to prevent and prosecute hate crimes against Americans based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. *(Signed into Law)*

**BORDER SECURITY EMERGENCY APPROPRIATIONS**, providing \$600 million to enhance security at the Southwest Border, including funding 1,200 additional Border Patrol agents, 500 additional CBP officers, and additional FBI, DEA, and ATF agents for the border region; paid for by visa fees. *(Signed into Law)*

**COPS ON THE BEAT**, putting an additional 50,000 cops on the street over the next 5 years. *(Passed by House)*

**CHEMICAL & WATER SECURITY ACT**, to increase security and safety of the nation's chemical plants and water facilities vulnerable to terrorist attacks and the millions of Americans that live nearby. *(Passed by House)*